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**THE IMPACT OF A NEW END OF LIFE CARE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY POST IN A COMMUNITY REHABILITATION TEAM**

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**Introduction** A newly funded EoLC occupational therapy post was recruited to in 2010 to work within a multi-professional generic adult community rehabilitation team. It was evaluated after 1 year.

**Aims** The post was created to support the EoLC strategy by increasing access to palliative and EoLC services for patients with both malignant and non-malignant conditions and to improve the quality of care provided. The post sits with the NHS community rehabilitation team and is supported by the hospice based community palliative care MDT.

**Methods** The post holder carries a specialist palliative care caseload, acts as an expert resource for colleagues, provides education, consults and helps 'skill up' generic therapists who may have had little or no exposure working with a palliative care population.

Review after 1 year of new service developments, structured feedback from colleagues within the service and in partnership organisations.

**Results** Increased understanding of the role and value of rehabilitation services in palliative and EoLC. Increase in number of palliative care patients treated by the team. Improved clinical care and patient satisfaction. Better coordination of care. Admission avoidance (on non-medical grounds). Key role enabling PPC to be achieved. Increase in advance care planning discussions and activities.

**Discussion** There has been an increase in access to adult community rehabilitation services and also improved quality of care provided to patients with a range of life limiting diseases through new service initiatives, sharing good practice and expertise and targeted education and training for team members.

**Conclusion** The existence of the EoLC post has demonstrably supported local and national EoLC strategy by broadening access to palliative and EoLC services. Professionals within the team have developed skills and specialist knowledge thus improving their competence and confidence. Enhanced quality of care has improved the experience of patients, their families and carers.